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FOUR LIVES IN ONE.

There was something about the wholesome cheerfulness of Freiburg, in Saxony, that fitted it to the last nature of Ronald Wyle, Esq., having run down there to spend a day or two among the students and the mines, and taking a liking to the quaint, unmodern town, he bodily changed his plans of autumn travel, gave up a cherished scheme of Russian vacationing, had his baggage sent from Dresden, and made ready to settle down and dawdle away three or four months in idleness and not over-arduous study. And this move of his led to the happening of a very strange and seemingly unaccountable event in his life.

Ronald Wyle was then 35 or 36 years of age, rather above the medium height, with thick blue-black hair that he had an artist's trick of allowing to ripple down to his neck, dark hazel eyes that were almost too deeply recessed in their bony orbits, and a troublesome growth of beard that, close-shaven as he always was, showed in strong blue outlines through the thin and rather yellow skin. His beard was singularly pleasing, and his wide experience of life, taught him by years of varied travel, made him a good deal of a cosmopolitan in his views and ways, which caused him to be taken as a not over-safe companion for young men of his own age or under.

Having made up his mind to winter in Freiburg, his first step was to quit the little hotel, with its noisy, smoky, and somewhat faded and its crowded dining-room, under which a full-curtained arched clove, berry, and smoky fumes lingered persistently, and seek quiet student lodgings in the heart of the town. His choice was mainly influenced by a tall, ruddy-bellied, bearded man, who, through the shoots of a vigorous Virginia creeper, that flamed and flickered in the breezy October sunsets in strong relief against the curtains that drifted whitely out and in through the open window. So, with the steady-going and hale old Frau Spritzkraffen he took up his quarters, fully persuaded himself that he did so for the sake of the stray home-breads that seemed to sit the earliest of the morning, more gently for him, and ignoring Lotleben's great, earnest, Saxon eyes as best he could.

A sunny morning found his removal to Frau Spritzkraffen's tidy home. There had been a slight rain in the early night, and the footways were yet bright and moist in patches that the alternating morning rays were slowly coaxing away. Ronald Wyle, having set his favorite books haphazardly on the dilly-draped table, which comprised for him the process of getting to rights, and having given more than one glance of amused wonderment at the naive blue-and-white script that caused his cumbersome four-story, earthenware stove and smiled faintly at the obvious and sudden indignation, even while the unclean half-eaten remained in his guilty hand, he stepped out on his balcony. Behind his elbows among the crimson leaves, and took in the beautiful morning in great draughts. It was a Sunday; the bells of the gray minster hard by were iterating their clanging calls to the simple town-folk to come and be drenched in sleep. Great clouds of smoke from the carved pillar-hung pulpit inside. Looking down he saw thick-ankled women clattering past in loose, wooden-soled shoes, and dumpy girls with low brows, phony dancing to their hips, conveying early Dutch built luggers of younger brothers up the gay steps that led to the church and the bells. Presently Frau Spritzkraffen and dainty Lotleben, rosy with soap and health, slipped through the doorway beneath him out into the little garden behind the house, and as they disappeared left the house and street somehow unaccountably alone. Feeling this, Ronald Wyle determined on a stroll.

Something in the Sabbath stillness around him led Ronald away from the swift clank and throb of the bells and in the direction of the old cemetery. Passing through the clumsy tower-gate that lifts its grimy bulk sulkily, like a huge head, some over the grave of a dead time of fondalism, he reached the burial-ground and entered the quiet enclosure. The usual touching reverence of the Germans for their dead was strikingly manifest around him. The humble mound, with its rough stones a foot or two above the pathway level, carried on their crests little gardens of gay and inexpensive plants; while on the tall wooden crosses at their head hung yellow wreaths, half hiding the hopeful legend, "Wieder-eben." The more pretentious slabs above vases filled with fresh flowers; while in the grate-barred vaults, that skirted the ground like the arches of a cloister, lay rusty heaps of long-stemmed candles, blooming, topped by newer wreaths tossed lovingly to wilt and turn to dust in their turn, like those cast in before them in memory of that other dusk asleep below.

Turning aside from the central walk that halved the cemetery, Ronald strolled along his hands in his pockets, his eyes listlessly fixed on the orange-colored fumes and rolling smoke that veiled out of tall chimneys in the hollow beyond, an idle student tune humming on his lips, and his thoughts up and down everywhere at once. Happening to look away from the dun smoke-trail for an instant, he found something of greater interest close at hand. An old man stooped slightly over a small mound, looked among the flowers that hid it, and by his side crouched a young girl, perhaps 14 years old, who peered up at Ronald with questioning velvet brown eyes. The old man heard the intruder's steps crunching in the damp gravel, and slowly looked up too.

"Good morning, mein Herr," said Ronald, pleasantly. The old man remained for an instant blinking nervously, and shading his eyes from the full sunlight that fell on his face. A quiet face it was, and very old, seemed and creased by many wrinkles that played at aimless cross-purposes with each other, beginning and ending nowhere. His thick beard and thin, curved nose, and his little blue eyes, and seemed at variance with his pale blue eyes that were still bright in spite of age. And yet, bearded as he was, there was a lurking expression about his features that bordered upon effrontery, and made the tremble of his voice sound ever more thin and womanish as he answered Wyle's greeting.

"Good morning, too," said Herr. A stranger to your town, I see. "Yes; but soon he will be called one, I hope. I am here for the winter."

"A cold reason—a cold reason; our northern winters are very chilling to an old man's blood. And slouching together into a tired story, he named his simple task of knitting a few flowers into a clumsy nosegay. Ronald stood and watched him with a vague interest. Presently, the flowers being clumped to his liking, the old man pried himself upright by getting a good purchase with his left hand in the small of his back, and so deliberately that Ronald almost fancied he heard them crack. The girl rose, too, and drew her thin shawl over her shoulders.

"You Germans love longer than we," said Lotleben, glancing at the flowers that trembled in the old man's bony fingers, and then downward to the quiet grave: "a lifetime's yearning for love and a year or two of water forgetting are enough for us."

"Should I urge my own flesh and blood?" asked the old man, simply. Ronald paused a moment, and pointing toward the grave, said: "Your daughter, then, I fancy?"

"Yes," said Lotleben. "Very long, more than fifty years." Ronald stared, but said nothing audibly. Inwardly he whispered something about being devilish glad to make the wandering Jew's acquaintance, rattled the loose grocer in his pocket, and turned to follow the tottering old man and firm-footed child down the path. After a dozen paces they halted before a more ambitious tombstone, on which Ronald could make out the well-remembered name of Platner. The child pointed the flowers and laid them reverently on the stone.

"It seems to me almost like arriving at the end of a pilgrimage," said Ronald, "when I stand by the grave of a man of science. Perhaps you know him, mein Herr?"

"He was my pupil," said Lotleben. "Whew!" thought Ronald; "that makes my friend here a centenarian at least." "My pupil and friend," the feeble voice went on; "and, more than that, my daughter's first love, and only one."

"Ach so!" said Ronald. "And now, on her death-day, I take these poor flowers from her to him, as I have done all these years."

"Something in the pathetic earnestness of his companion touched Ronald Wyle, and he forthwith took his hands out of his pockets, and didn't try to whistle—which was a great deal for him to do. "I know Platner well by his works," he said; "I once studied mineralogy for nearly a month."

"You love science, then?" "Yes; like everything else, for diversion." "It was different with him," quavered the old man, pointing unsteadily to the headstone. "Science grew to be his passion, and many lacivories rewarded him for his devotion. He was groping on the track of a far greater achievement when he died."

"May I ask what it was?" said Ronald, now fairly interested. "The creation and isolation of the principle of life!"

"This was too much for Ronald Wyle; down dived his restless hand into his trousers' pockets again, and the grocer rattled as merrily as before. "I have made quite a study of biology, and all that sort of thing," said he; "and, although I am a great deal of a skeptic, as I inclined to follow Huxley, I can't bring myself to conceive of life without organism. Such theorizing is, to my mind, on a par with the illogical search for the philosopher's stone and a perpetual motor."

"The old man's eyes sparkled as he turned full upon Ronald. "You dismiss the subject very airily, my young friend; he cried; but let me tell you that I—I, whom you see here—have grappled with such problems through a weary century, and have conquered one of them."

"And that one is—?" "The one that conquered Platner."

"Do I understand you to claim that you have discovered the life-principle?" "Yes."

"Will you permit an utter stranger to inquire what it is?" "Certainly. It is too fond. The ultimate principle of life is carbon; the cause of its combination with water, and the development of organized existence therefrom, is electricity."

Ronald Wyle shrugged his broad shoulders, and in response a shaky, side-long roll of the old man's head, as if it were mounted on a weak spiral spring. Farther on they intersected a knot of students, who eyed them askance and exchanged remarks in unknown tongues. Keeping on deeper into the fold heart of the town, they passed through swarms of idle children playing sportively, as pawns in a game played in the dark shadows of the narrow street. They seemed to march in a rhythmic way by the side of Ronald's new friend, and even ventured to hurl a clod at him; but this striking Ronald hurriedly when it came, caused a sudden sinking of the crowd into unknown holes, like a board of rats, and the street was for a time empty save for the little party that threaded it. Ronald began thinking that the old man's sanity now gravely called in doubt by the town-folk, and would really have backed out of his adventure but for the curiosity that had now got the upper hand of him.

Presently the old man stilled into a dingy doorway, like a tired beaver run to earth, and Ronald followed him, not without a wish that the architect had provided for a more efficient lighting of the sombre passage-way in which he found himself. A sharp turn to the right, after a dozen groping paces, a narrow stairway, a long and wearying step downward through a cavernous doorway that took away Ronald's breath for a moment, and sent it back again with a hot, creeping wave of sudden perspiration all over him, as the way with mistle, and two more sharp turns, brought the three into a black, no-thoroughfare of hall, whose farther end was closed by a locked door.

The girl here rubbed a brimstone oblongation of a match into a malodorous green glow, and by its help the old man pried himself upright by getting a good purchase with his left hand in the small of his back, and so deliberately that Ronald almost fancied he heard them crack. The girl rose, too, and drew her thin shawl over her shoulders.

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WILLIAM MCCANDLESS, Dealer in Choice Beef, Feet, Mutton, Etc. No. 8 QUEEN STREET, FISH MARKET. Family and Shipping orders carefully attended to. Live Stock (unloaded to vessels at short notice. Vegetables of all kinds supplied to order. Telephone No. 143. 217-278.

Business Cards.

W. F. ALLEN, Has an office with Messrs. Bishop & Co., corner of Merchant and Kaahumanu streets, and he will be pleased to attend to any business entrusted to him. 210-177.

WEST, DOW & CO., Importers and Dealers in all kinds of Music, Fancy and Japanese Goods. Furniture of all kinds. Sewing Machines, Mirrors, Paintings, Chessmen and Toys; Picture Frames and Cornices; and more. Moving and repairing Furniture a specialty. No. 105 FORT STREET, HONOLULU. 210-261.

Insurance Notices, BOSTON BOARD OF UNDERWRITERS, C. BREWER & Co., Agents for the Hawaiian Islands. 210-261.

BRITISH FOREIGN MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY (Limited), THEO. H. DAVIES, AGENT. The above agent has received instructions to reduce the rates of Insurance between Honolulu and Ports in the Pacific, and is now prepared to issue policies at the lowest rates, with a special reduction on freight per steamers. 210-261.

BREMEN BOARD OF UNDERWRITERS, F. A. SCHAEFER & Co., Agents. Also agents for the Dresden Board of Underwriters, Vienna Board of Underwriters. For the Hawaiian Islands. 210-261.

FORTUNA GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY of Berlin. F. A. SCHAEFER & Co., AGENTS. The above Insurance Company, has established a General Agency here, and the undersigned, General Agents, are authorized to take risks against the dangers of the Seas at the most reasonable rates, and on the most favorable terms. 210-261.

GERMAN LLOYD MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY of Berlin. F. A. SCHAEFER & Co., AGENTS. The above Insurance Company has established a General Agency here, and the undersigned, General Agents, are authorized to take risks against the dangers of the Seas at the most reasonable rates, and on the most favorable terms. 210-261.

HAMBURG-MAGDEBURG FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY of Hamburg. A. JAEGER, AGENT. Building, Merchandise, Furniture and Machinery Insured against Fire on the most favorable terms. 210-261.

HAMBURG-BREMEN FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY. F. A. SCHAEFER & Co., AGENTS. The above firm having been appointed agents of this company, are prepared to insure risks against fire on Stone and Brick buildings and on Merchandise stored thereon, on the most favorable terms. For particulars apply at their office. 210-261.

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